

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheets makes changes to Figs. 2 and 3 and replace the original sheets with Figs. 2 and 3.

REMARKS

Claims 8-40 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Figs. 2 and 3 are amended. Support for the amendments to Figs. 2 and 3 can be found in the specification as originally filed, for example, at page 2, line 18 - page 3, line 12; page 4, line 22 - page 5, line 8; and in Figs. 2 and 3 as originally filed. No new matter is added by these amendments.

I. Objections to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to Figures 2 and 3 of the drawings as only illustrating that which is old. Applicants respectfully submit that Figures 2 and 3 are amended herein to include the legend "Prior Art," as required by the Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

II. Claim Rejections

The Office Action rejects claims 8-11, 16-19, 24-27, 32-35 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0014330 A1 to Ichikawa et al. The Office Action further rejects claims 12-15, 20-23, 28-31 and 36-39 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0014330 A1 to Ichikawa et al.

The Ichikawa reference has an international filing date of December 1, 2003. However, the instant application is the U.S. National Stage of International Application No. PCT/JP03/16796, filed December 25, 2003, and claims priority to Japanese Patent Application No. JP 2003-004833, which was filed on January 10, 2003. A copy of the certified copy of JP 2003-004833 was transmitted by the International Bureau to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, as indicated on the February 23, 2005, Notice of Acceptance of Application Under 35 U.S.C. 371 and 37 CFR 1.495. An accurate English-language translation priority document is attached hereto, perfecting the claim for priority to JP 2003-004833.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



William P. Berridge
Registration No. 30,024

Julie M. Lake
Registration No. 51,156

WPB:JML/ccs

Attachments:

Replacement Drawing Sheets

English-language translation of Japanese Patent Application No. JP 2003-004833

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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